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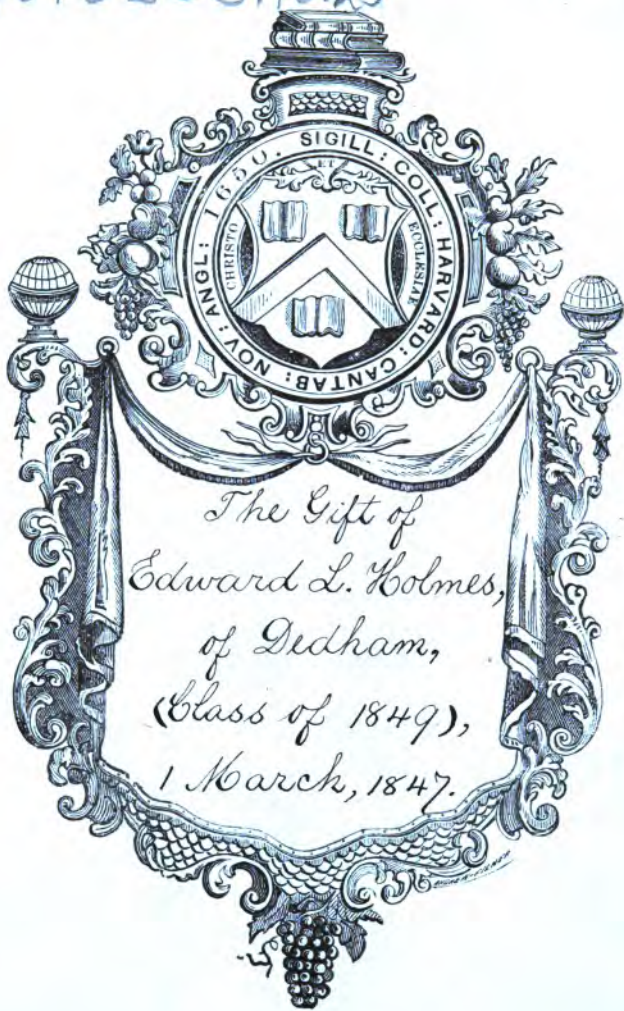
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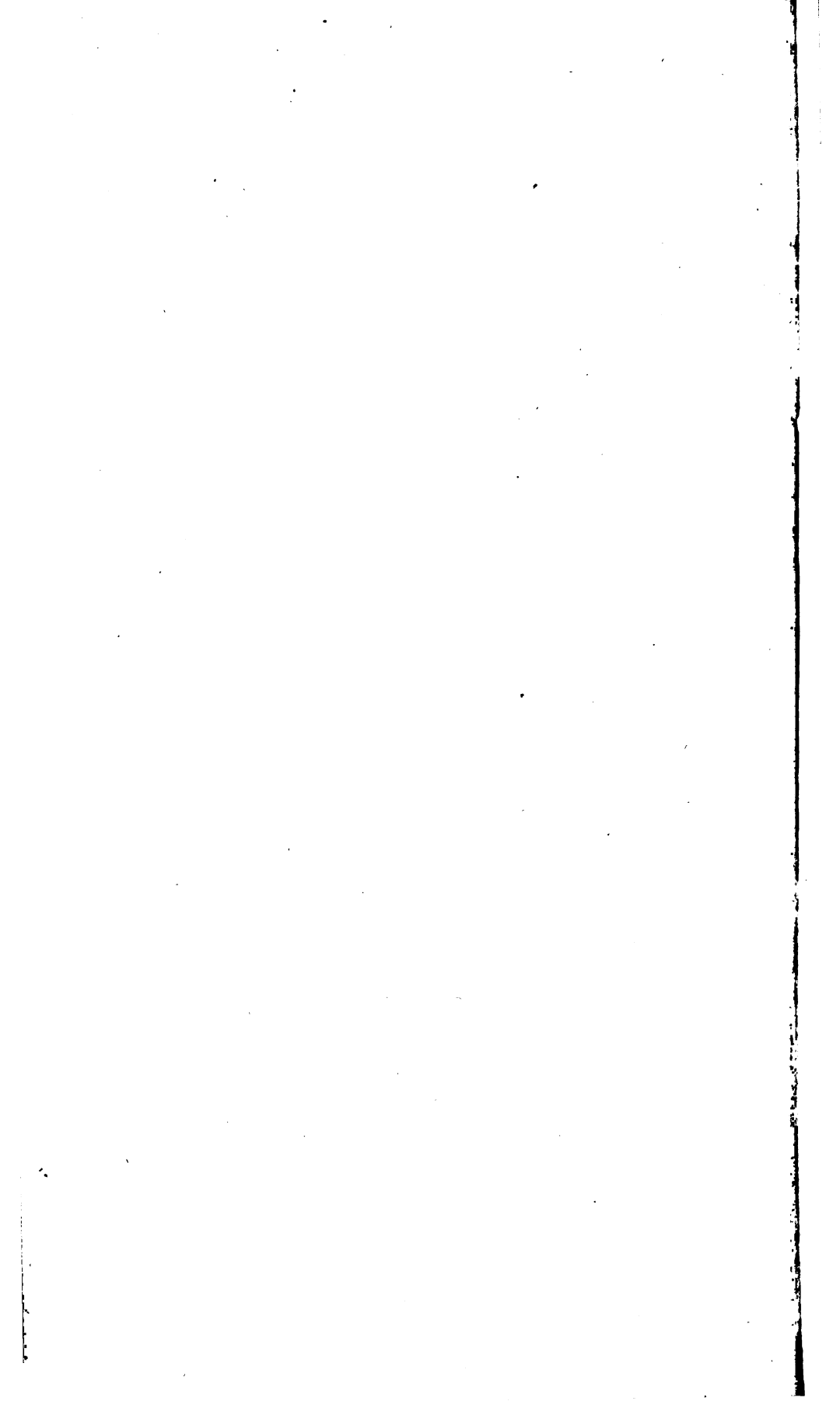
1897



The
Historical Discourse
delivered at the

REV. S. B. BABCOCK'S

HISTORICAL DISCOURSE.



A

HISTORICAL DISCOURSE

DELIVERED AT THE CLOSING OF THE

OLD EPISCOPAL (St. Paul's) CHURCH, DEDHAM,

2

NOVEMBER 30, 1845,

BY REV. SAMUEL B. BABCOCK.

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Libt of Edward L. Holmes
of the Schreiner class
— from Dedham.

DISCOURSE.

Deut. 4, 32. "Ask now of the days that are past."

The place in which we are now met, will soon be of the things that are past ; and perhaps a better improvement of the last occasion of our meeting here, cannot be made, than to review the past history of the society, that has worshipped in this Temple.

Brethren, the pleasant excitement of *research* has been mine. Yours will be, perhaps, the weary listening to a recital of facts, the bearing of which, is not seen, till the mind quietly compares what is, with what has been.

This society dates its origin many years prior to the American Revolution, and was not an exception, by any means, to the fierce trials which every thing, connected with England, had to endure. Nor may we think too fondly, that the ante-revolution churches, ever enjoyed that full favor of public confidence, which could make them popular. They were *only*, they were *hardly tolerated*. They were looked upon suspiciously. Legal enactments were made against them. Odious names were attached to the church and to churchmen. Children were educated to dislike the Church, and many places of public distinction were closed against the admission of Episcopalians.

We do not censure that spirit, or the conduct by which it was manifested. It would be to censure the spirit and conduct of our own ancestors, of whose memory, none who respect themselves, would speak disrespectfully. And that there was good ground for dreading the introduction of Episcopacy into the Colonies, we will not deny. This is a sure consequence of bearing divine treasures in earthly vessels, and most singularly exemplified in Colonial days, by the intolerant course pursued

on the part of our forefathers, towards those, whose views did not precisely square with their own.

But though the unfriendly feeling towards the Church, cannot be disguised, now, as *then* it was not attempted to be concealed, yet it was perhaps only an exponent of the spirit of the times—of times when dissatisfaction prevailed on one side, and was met by jealousy on the other ; of times when men were accustomed to make free use of weapons of war—either to defend themselves against the prowling red man,—or hunt the wild beasts that annoyed them. Men were familiar with scenes of strife, and where strife is, you may hardly look for quiet subordination, even to wholesome authority.

Nor do we mean to say that our motherland, *did* exercise that judicious authority best calculated to conciliate and secure esteem, and may have been harsh towards those who were turbulent, when forbearance and kindness may have subdued the refractory. And the Church, conjoined with the civil power, an union we deprecate, most sincerely, might have been more lenient, respecting surplices and the bowing at Jesus' sacred name, and kneeling at her prayers, if perhaps the concession would allay the irritation that was felt towards her. Though there is some reason to fear, that no concession—save that of *every thing*, would have satisfied those who were so violent in language and sacrilegious in conduct, as many in the Usurper's day were, towards the Church of England. The spirit of the times was unpropitious to any but a fiery religion, and stakes and faggots, the prison and the gallows, were the once common arguments to bring men to a knowledge of the truth. It was tried at home, i. e. in *old* England where the Church and State had *combined* power, and no less freely tried, here, in *New* England, when *Church and State* had combined power, on this side of the ocean. For my hearers will understand—that, de facto, such an alliance existed here as well as there.

Thus Episcopacy came in, when our colonies cherished a strong dislike towards Episcopacy. There were, nevertheless on our shores, a few, rather not a few, who from pure affection and honest convictions, added to early education, still clung to the religion of the old land and desired to enjoy its blessed privileges—in their adopted land. And in some half century, after the settlement of New England, was built Kings Chapel,

Boston. Another *third* of a century elapsed, and Christ Church, Boston, was built, and in eleven years more, bringing us to A. D. 1734, was built *Trinity Church, Boston*.

And at this period we pause a moment as that in which we find the earliest notice of our own humble yet ancient society, say an hundred years, or thereabouts, after the incorporation of the Town of Dedham. (1) We would learn the state of public feeling towards us. A single fact will aid to show this. St. Peters Church, Salem, was built about this time—and desiring such aid as an organ might afford, to divine worship, they obtained, after some difficulty and delay, a grant, “*by a vote of the Town,*” to use one. And this, after an act of toleration had been passed, allowing the members of the Church of England to worship God without molestation. (2)

The feelings of hostility towards the church, at the beginning of the last century, (the time of which we now speak) was very decided and very severe—of which multiplied illustrations might be afforded. Says a divine of the Church of England, writing home from this country, (Humph. hist. ac. P. 317)—“the people were threatened with imprisonment, and a forfeiture of five pounds for coming to hear me. It would require more time than you would willingly bestow on these lines, to express how rigidly and severely they treat our people by taking their estates by distress, when they do not willingly pay to support their ministers, and though every Churchman in that Colony (Connecticut) pays his rate for the building and repairing their meeting houses, yet they are so set against us, that they deny us the use of them, though on week days. All the Churchmen in this Colony request is, that they may not *be oppressed and insulted over.*”

And we get a clue to these intimations, perhaps, by a little investigation of our own Laws—as existing at the time of which we speak.

1st, “Every gathered Church (Neal’s Hist. vol. 2, P. 362) shall chuse its minister, and if the major part of the inhabitants

(1) Dr. Cutler came here about A. D. 1700, and baptised children of — Kingsbury, on Dedham Island. Dr. C. was invited to come occasionally and preach to them. [Mont. Papers.

(2) A. D. 1667. “General Court consented that no person should be hindered from performing divine service according to the Church of England.” “1742,” says Dr. L., p. 56, “Law passed making it the duty of towns and parishes, to allow the taxes of such as attended worship in an Episcopal Church.”

concur with the Church's Act, he shall be maintained by the town." So that under this act, an Episcopalian in those days, must needs have paid sometimes towards the support of a minister, who should not be a teacher after his own heart. But perhaps you say—there were neighboring Churches where he could attend, to worship the Lord after his own ideas of the beauty of holiness. But unfortunately another Colonial Statute was in his way—viz :

"Whoever profanes the Sabbath after admonition, pays for the first offence 5s, for the second 10s, and be bound over for the County Court, for the third. But "to travel to a meeting not allowed by law, is a profanation of the Sabbath."

In every town then, where an Episcopalian resided, in which there was no church of his own preference, and in a Colony most loudly professing against oppression for conscience's sake, a poor Churchman was, constructively, but little better than a sabbath breaker, for seeking his soul's food where his preference was, *even though* he paid his ministerial tax, to support those to whom he could not conscientiously listen. If, however, I am told, this was but retributive justice, I only reply that the divine rule is, and was then, "Render to no man evil for evil." I speak however only of facts, and rejoice that a brighter day has dawned upon us. Such were the sentiments and such the laws, at the time, when the first notice of our Church is found. But as we saw respecting the "Organ case" at Salem, that "towns" had certain prerogatives granted to them, and when closely pressed, exercised them, so in the present case, we find an apparent, and I think real liberality of feeling, existing here.

At this present time, it will be remembered that the statute stood that the "General Court *consents* that no person *should be hindered* from performing divine service according to the Church of England." A more grateful action was taking place, *here*, than bare consent, for I find in the warrant for a meeting of the first Parish of this town, the following article, viz :—March 10, 1734—5. To see "if it be their minds to free from ministerial charges here, such inhabitants as have evidenced that they are professed members of the Church of England, so long as they continue so." And the vote passed, and the following year a similar vote was passed. The language is—"Proposed if it be

the mind of the precinct that the persons who have engaged and do still continue to carry on the worship of God on Sabbath days, in the way of the established Church of England, shall be remitted their part of our Reverend Pastor's salary for the time past, what they have not paid of it, since they have been so engaged and shall bring a certificate within two months from some minister in that order, unto the assessors of the Precinct that they have, and do attend the worship of God, in that way as aforesaid," &c.

In less than the prescribed two months, the certificate came, duly signed by Timothy Cutler, minister of the Church of England, in Boston, dated May 15, 1734.

But who were these Churchmen, good and true, to travel those ten miles and upwards, to Boston each sabbath day—for the word that nourisheth unto eternal life? A small document rescued from that oblivion, where probably many an one is irrecoverably lost, and which is probably our *first* Church document, tells us, at least, their names, and something more. Thus it reads. "Dedham, February 5th, 1733—4. We, the subscribers hereof, having met at the dwelling house of Joseph Aspinwalls of said Dedham, on the day above written, have jointly agreed to purchase of Josiah Smith a piece of land containing one acre and a half in the said town of Dedham, commonly called Pains Orchard, on which land we do hereby jointly agree that we will build a Church, as witness our hands. Joseph Smith, John Buckmaster, Noah Kingsbury, John Downy, Moses White, John Taylor, James White, Joseph Aspinwalls, Peter Violas, Benjamin Holden, Thomas Buckmaster."

Alas for the chances and changes of this mortal life, they and their descendants, with perhaps but a single exception are not known among us. A neighboring pond, still perpetuates the name of one, and John Downy's cellar yet marks where his house stood. Joseph Aspinwall probably removed to Steughton, now Canton, and aided in the building of the Church there. [That Church was built two or three years previous to this, and the grave yard is yet there, where the remains of many Churchmen are now lying undisturbed. But the form of religion they best loved, is not now known in that town.] And we know no more, of consequence, of the first Episcopalians of Dedham. It is not certain the Church was ever built,—it is

not known, (that I have been able to discover,) where "Pains orchard" was. In reference to them, by way of facts, I have only to add, that two were petty officers of the Precinct.

An hundred and eleven years back! Subjects of King George 2nd, of whom it is said (Rees Cyclo.) "that the general principles of his administration both civil and religious, were liberal and just," and whose own declaration was "that during his reign, there should be no persecution for conscience' sake.

And those ancient men travelled from Dedham to Boston, sabbath after sabbath, to worship God after the dictates of their own conscience, making no trouble, and receiving none, save their journey,—and regularly bringing back their certificates, to prove they were not Sabbath breakers, according to the construction of the Colonial laws. Where their ashes repose, we know not. Wherever they are, may they rest in peace.

And in Quincy, then Braintree, there were Churchmen at that period—enjoying the services they loved, under the ministry of the Rev. Dr. Miller—who extended his services to Dedham, and here preached the word and administered the sacraments of our religion.

He preached here June 20, 1756—and this record is inscribed in an ancient Almanac, still extant, viz: "1758, January 8. Doct. Miller carried on the Church *sarvis*, in the meeting house, and preached to a great number." A fortnight afterwards he was here again, and preached in a private house—from Acts 9th, 1st to 6th verse, about the persecution of the 1st Christians—and in five days after this, viz: "Jan. 30, 1758—Churchmen met and agreed to build a Church." And as the First Parish meeting house offered its open doors for Dr. Miller, we record for them the expression of our thanks, before we look at the history of the erection of the new Church, which is none other than these veritable timbers, that tomorrow are to be officially *un*-consecrated, as no longer servicable for that to which eighty-six years ago they were appointed.

But what was the encouragement to an undertaking so novel, in the "Precinct" as this? In the first place, though Joseph Aspinwall and his company—the Churchmen of 1733—were perhaps either deceased or removed, there were others, who went to Braintree, (now Quincy) to hear Dr. Miller, and who

not only found it inconvenient, as needs they must, through roads, even at the present day, bewildering to the stranger—but who found it, at least not altogether agreeable, to adjust the fines, and the inajunations made at home. Nay, Samuel Colburn, (so I am informed by a gentleman, (1) particular in facts,) was gently charged with neglect of public worship, on those Sundays, when he went to Braintree. Then came the French war of 1756. And the Colonies must send their quota of men. This Samuel Colburn was drafted, and paid his fine, and remained at home. And then, if tradition be right, a second draft was made, and Samuel Colburn was drawn again—and a third draft—and still that same name. And the very general tradition is, that he then suspected his *religion*, to be the occasion of this remarkable iteration of the same event, and that he declared he would serve—but in case he did not return—there should be an Episcopal Church in the very town. “He was born A. D. 1733 on the 15th day of May.”—“Made his Will, May 1st, 1756.”—“Set out for Crown Point, with Ben Holden, (before named) May 8—same year, and died in the night of Oct. 30, 1756, at the great meadows between Saratoga and Stillwater.” His will was proved January 7, 1757. In it he devised his property to this Church, to come in possession after the decease of his mother. And that property, or his landed estate, covers as you all know, a large portion of our beautiful and peaceful village. (2)

The income of that munificent bequest has been the chief support of preaching in this society, and without it, or some similar provision, our Society would probably, have long since, been of the things that were.

There was great encouragement, of course, on the 15th of Feb. 1758, to have “writings drawn and signed to build a Church.” Even before this writing was drawn and signed, one of the number “got four pieces of timber, *the first for the Church*, on the 2nd of February,”—his heart glowing, I ween, with hope, though it was mid winter, when his hands grasped the axe.

(1) The Hon. William Ellis has kindly furnished me, with many historical facts, of much interest and value.

(2) Mr. Colburn became acquainted with the Church of England and received a Prayer Book from a Mr. Clarke, of Boston, to whom he frequently carried ship timber, in which Mr. Colburn dealt largely. [See the papers in possession of Mr. Montague.

In June 5th, 1758, a Mr. Dupee, as chief carpenter, came from a neighboring town, to frame the Church. The site of the Church was opposite to, or nearly so, the situation of that, whose tower has so recently risen up before us, like the guardian-spirit of the beautiful elms in its neighborhood. The shadows of that tower repose probably, towards the close of the day, on the very spot, where these timbers once were raised.

But with all Mr. Dupee's care, an accident happened. For in raising the Church, July 12, 1758, (very near the identical day and month, of raising our yet unoccupied Church) when the Church was raised to the middle beam, the beam broke, and twelve men fell"—howbeit "none were killed, nor had a limb broken." And while the Church was building, Dr. Miller was still engaged in his part of the work, for he came and baptised two children. *Ben Holden* still kept faithful, (for being at the Castle in the harbor, probably on military duty) he sent here for his Prayer Book.

The work progressed, till July 12, 1759, when Dupee went home,—and till July 4th, 1760, when Joshua Whittemore received "the just sum of fourteen pounds old Tenor, for glazing the Church in said Town of Dedham."

A further item, respecting that important matter is this.—"Now the Kingsbury and Richard's family went on to build an Episcopal Church." But their funds allowed them only "to set up a wood frame 40 feet by 30, rough board and lay a rough board floor, and shingle it, and thus it stood till certain gentlemen passing from Boston to Newport, who were English-educated Churchmen, viewing it, lamented the want of wisdom in their American Church Brethren, in not first setting down and counting the cost, who as to numbers then, might have met in a common-sized Bed-room, put their hands in their pockets and gave sufficient to give the outside a decent appearance."—[Mont. papers] Thus it stood till 1770—(viz : till Mr. Clarke's day.)

Ask you the names of the first building committee? Perhaps a few hours hence they may be discovered among the foundation stones on which we stand. Lest they should not be, I will simply state part of the contents of a receipt in my possession, of which the caption and close are as follows :

"We the subscribers, and committee to receive the money subscribed, towards building an house for the worship of God, in Dedham, in *the Episcopal way*, have received" &c. &c.—and signed "Sam'l Richards, Ezekiel Kingsbury." On the back of which receipt, probably that it might be carefully filed away, is superscribed, "a receipt from Sam'l Richards and Ezekiel Kingsbury, Committee men which built a house for the worship of God, in Dedham."

How was that Church consecrated? For in the Colonies, they had no Bishop, and great pains were taken by the Colonists to prevent any from being sent. It was probably consecrated only by the prayers and thanksgivings of those who worshipped there. And how were its first services supplied, after Dr. Miller's had ceased? This document, also rescued from approaching oblivion, tells us how.

Dedham, June 10, 1765. As I have been appointed to succeed Dr. Miller in the care of the societies of the Church of England communion, in the towns of Braintree, Dedham and Stoughton," &c.—and signed "y'r humble serv't, Edward Winslow." And on the first Parish records. "Voted to grant the sums of £2, 10s and 5d 3-4 to make good the deficiency which paying over the taxes of the members of the Church of England to the Rev. Mr. Winslow, has occasioned in the Rev. Mr. Haven's salary." And this vote was passed for four successive years. Of this divine, I have gathered but scanty information. He seems not to have displaced the memory of Dr. Miller from the esteem of some, for on the Church records of our Parish, for the year 1799, it stands, "that our elections, &c. be conformed as nearly as possible to the Episcopal Church, in Quincy, at the time the late Dr. Miller was minister."

With Mr. Winslow, closes virtually the history of our Church in its first era—or up to the American Revolution. It is of few details I know. Their fewness will, one day, make them to be prized the more. You meet to day, over the decayed timbers of the Church of 1758. You entered under the self same door way, and after to day, we probably enter them never again. Brethren, see that by holy lives, ye have an abundant entrance, ministered unto you through heavenly portals, to a temple that decayeth not, and not made with hands.

The new Church was at last built and finished, though probably to the surprise of many of the good citizens of the town.

For I find its slow progress, was matter of merriment and metre, and of music too. For it became a song in the mouths of young men. After a recitation in metre, of many improbabilities, the chorus was subjoined—

“When you and I these things shall see,
Then Dedham Church will finished be.”

But it *was* finished, and I judge paid for, and Dr. Miller and Mr. Winslow, had probably preached in it—and the Society had probably increased—for it seems that in 1768, they had nearly the whole services of a clergyman, viz :—the Rev. William Clark.

Mr. Clark appears to have been a graduate of Harvard University of the Class 1759, and in 1768, was appointed to the care of the churches in Stoughton and Dedham, by the Society for the Prop. of Gos. &c. He was married to a lady of this town, relative of Samuel Colburn, and the descendants of his wife's family, are at this day among our esteemed citizens.

But our dates have brought us to that eventful crisis of history, the American Revolution, when every thing connected with England was hateful to the American mind. The members of the English Church were generally loyal to their religion—and very many of them loyal to their sovereign. But *loyalty was sin*, on American soil—and he was his country's friend, who was England's foe. Why should I speak of the rifling of Episcopal churches, in such a time? of melting the leaden pipes of the old Cambridge Church Organ for bullets—or of destroying in our Church, all the labor of Mr. Whittemore, in glazing the Church? or of its being converted into a military depot? Such incidents belong to stormy periods of the history of every country, and every Episcopal, or as then called, English Church, shared a similar fate in this. Their Clergy forsook, or were driven from their stations. Some returned to England, others retired from the scenes of contest, and “Mr. Clark was seized by violence, sent on board a guard ship lying in the river at Boston,—was condemned to be transported as a FELON to the West Indies, and his property to be confiscated.” While in confinement through the hot season of 1777, “he contracted a disorder on his lungs, as to be almost deprived of the power of speech. To add to his affliction, a deafness so increased upon him, that he well nigh lost his hearing.” Sick—

persecuted—depressed—deprived of property, prevented from performing the functions of his office—driven first from his Church, then officiating in the dwelling of his brother-in-law, and thence driven away—denied the privilege of council—he was glad to leave the country. He was compelled to throw himself upon the pension-fund of England. On which side of the water was his birth place, I do not know. It was probably on this. His burial place is in the old Quincy church yard, and a stone is said to mark the spot of his interment.

He is said to have been a particularly inoffensive citizen, and never preached on, or discussed the political affairs of the country. He did once give shelter to an unfortunate refugee, driven from Boston by an enraged populace, and did once advise two loyalists, where they might find a friend to protect them in a neighboring County. But in those days, the pointing of a finger, was a token of evil, and the committee of vigilance, had eyes too keen to overlook it. And so William Clark, the Rector, was borne to prison, and Daniel Webb, the sexton, was borne to prison, and Samuel White was borne to prison, and Timothy Richards, whom I myself buried,—was to have been, but he evaded their pursuit. [See Note A.] And I mention these things, as facts in our Society's history, while I am free to say, in approval of my country's conduct, that she did right, to keep her eye wide open on those, who even seemed to favor the King's cause.

It was not a time to weigh matters over-nicely. There are times, when to hesitate is fatal,—when to stop to show mercy is to be the destroyer of yourself. As soon as they had time to consider, they re-called, (and that was almost immediately,) two of the three. Samuel White, left the country, and Daniel Webb, died in Dedham, a few years since. [See Note B.]

How long the shattered Church remained, unrepaired, I do not learn. There were probably occasional services in it, through the appointment of Dr. Parker, of Boston, afterwards Bishop of the Diocese—of whom it is said, "that he assiduously devoted all the time he could spare from his family and Church, to the restoration of the scattered churches and societies, which had been dispersed by the civil contentions and belligerent operations of that memorable period," viz : the Revolution.

In 1791 or 1792, the owners or proprietors, of the Episcopal Church, apparently recovering from the shock that had scattered them, invited the Rev. William Montague of Boston, to come and assist them in opening the Church. Pews were to be built. The inside was to be finished—an Organ to be purchased, price not exceeding £100, previous to Easter Sunday, 1792. This movement was probably consequent on the death of Mrs. Colburn, mother of the devisor of our Church property, and who had enjoyed, by virtue of that will, a life-income from that property. [See Note C.]

Some Parish votes, apparently singular, and which may in future days, excite enquiry, were passed in 1792, and following years. They will be explained as we proceed. They are as follows: Voted, that the Rev Wm. Montague have liberty to live or reside in Boston, Cambridge, Braintree or Dedham.

In 1795, the first delegates to a State Convention, were elected. The same year voted—that the Rector may reside in any town, not exceeding twelve miles from the Episcopal Church, in Dedham.

In 1796, for the first time we discover a prenomem for our Church. It was then called *Christ's Church*. I can learn nothing of the history of this name, nor have I ever found when it was exchanged for that of St. Paul's Church, which it now bears.

In July, 1797, a vote was passed to remove the Old Church, from its first to its present position, where we are now met. In its passage here, it was long delayed in a valley of the road, now filled up to a level, with the other road, but at last it safely reached its destined site. But standing too low—an attempt was made to raise it six feet higher. Some oak shores were procured, and some pine saplings, of which I read, "they were so tender, that they were as Jonah's Gourd that grew in a night." Poor saplings! one bent, and then another, and in ten seconds, after the workmen were escaped, the old Church, whose middle beam broke at its first raising in 1758, fell, and broke into a thousand pieces. But happily, as in the former case, so in the present, "there was no person killed, hurt, or a drop of blood drawn." (1) But just where the tower fell, (the old Church

(1) Among the humorous catastrophes of the fall of the Church was the dislodgment of armies of bats—which being so unceremoniously ejected, without due notice given, made themselves free to quarter upon the neighbors as their own convenience might be promoted, whether agreeable or not to those of whom they made themselves the guests.

had what was called a tower,) stood, a second before, Mr. Seth Sumner, who by a powerful leap, barely escaped being crushed to death, by the fall. (1) It was, however, immediately rebuilt, and 1798, perhaps for the first time in the history of Dedham, *Episcopal* functions were performed, viz :—at the consecration of the Church, by the Rt. Rev. Bishop Bass.

In 1804, voted to assess the pews to procure funds to *finish* the Church.

June, 1807, Voted—that the thanks of the Church be presented to Madam Esther Sprague for her generous and very liberal donation of five hundred dollars for the benefit of the Church—and same year, (for of these worthy donors, we would have the memorial brought down to our day,)—voted—“that the thanks of the society be given to Mrs. Elizabeth D. Swett, for the fine, handsome linen, suitable for the communion table,—given that every thing might be in order and decent within the altar.”

And yet once more the same year, voted—that the thanks of this society be given to a worshipper, this day before us, for a present of eighteen dollars towards furnishing the altar.

In 1812, voted that the Rev. Wm. Montague, Rector of this Church, shall have a right to live in any part of the Eastern Diocese—then extending over all the New England States, except Connecticut. [See Note D.]

In 1818, the connection ceased between Rev. Mr. Montague and this Society. It had continued twenty-six years. As a public citizen, he was very much interested in the prosperity of the Town. Several of our streets were laid out under his direction—and many of our prominent beauties are the result of his suggestion. But the Church at large, throughout the once Eastern Diocese, is greatly indebted to the person of whom we speak. He was indefatigably useful, in recovering to the Church those glebes, that had been alienated, during the stormy period of the Revolution ; and comfortable incomes for many a parish, particularly in the States of Vermont and New Hampshire, have been secured by his labors, according to their

(1) There were still found among the bye-standers, on that occasion, enough prejudiced against the Church—to exclaim as they saw the ruins, “’Tis the last kick of the beast.” It was not so. Episcopacy dies hard, if it ever dies.

original and rightful destination. And it was, I believe, that he might engage, in this most desirable enterprise, that those votes were passed, permitting him to reside in any part of the Eastern Diocese. It was the melancholy duty of your present minister to perform over his remains, the last offices of our Church. He died on the 22d July, 1833.

From 1818 to November, 1821, this Parish had no settled Minister. The Rev. Cheever Felch, Chaplain of the Navy, officiated from Easter, 1819, till nearly the beginning of 1821. Occasional services, during the interval, between the dissolution of the connection of Mr. Montague, and the formation of a new one with Dr. Boyle, were rendered by the neighboring clergy.

The gentleman last named, was Rector of the Church from Nov. 1821, to 1832. An interesting testimonial to his "moral character, christian integrity, and pastoral fidelity," is inscribed among the Church records. He was, he is an accomplished scholar, and but for the misfortune of severe deafness, would be agreeable and instructive, more than men ordinarily are.

My friends, I have hastened for your sakes, rapidly down to the time, when I reach your own fresh memories—and, that you may have time to glance back on the history of your Church, and compare the present with the past. I will only add further, by way of statistics, that as I can best collect the facts, the official services connected with the Church, from its inception, down to day, have been as follows, viz :

By	Baptisms.	Confirmations.	Marriages.	Burials.
<i>Rev. Dr. Miller</i>	3	0	0	0
" <i>Mr. Montague</i>	157	0	28	24
" <i>Mr. Marshall</i>	5	0	0	0
" <i>Mr. Felch</i>	23	0	5	4
" <i>Dr. Boyle</i>	63	39	17	35
" <i>S. B. Babcock</i>	97	32	20	56
Total,	348	71	70	117

But probably each of these offices of the Church were performed by several of the Clergymen officiating occasionally here, of which the records are either lost or destroyed—if any were ever made.

Besides the above named presents to the Church, may be named, the gift of our bell, by a general subscription of the citizens in 1818. It cost three hundred and thirty dollars, and weighs six hundred and sixty-four pounds. Since then, our organ has been procured, to which the late Mr. Edward Whiting, a long and faithful friend to the Church, was a chief and large contributor. In 1838, a piece of communion plate was presented us, by Mrs. Anstis Townsend. Since 1832, a beautiful surplice was presented by the Ladies of the Society.

Were it as much in accordance with the design of this discourse, as with my own feelings, I could speak of acts of private generosity to the present minister, that have encouraged him in the belief of the sympathy of many friends, to whom be many thanks.

Beloved, we have asked of the days that are past, what they can communicate to us, of our former estate. And their response has not been, at least to myself, without interest. They have told us, that within an hundred years we were a people small and of no account. That our fore-worshippers were men struggling to maintain themselves, against prejudices an hundred years old, when as yet there were few of them.

I will not say that our Church sprang from the blood of the martyrs, although young Colburn had reason to believe he might never, (considering he had a slender constitution) live to return from the war. But there is certainly much interest connected with all the incidents of that starting point of our existence. We have heard of the readiness of Clergymen living, for those days, at a wearisome distance from this then struggling Parish, coming over to help us—and also, that when the word was not brought to the people, how they, the people, travelled far, to seek the word.

We have seen them, under the shadow of a large congregation, with a compass that extended not over the village only, but all the region round about. We have seen our little band, rearing in God's name and to his worship, their humble temple, striving to do what they could, and undertaking *more* than they could accomplish—that the ark of the covenant might have a resting place in their midst,—holding their religious service, probably, in a house not even plastered, or perhaps shingled, till strangers took compassion on them, and from their pockets

drew the funds, that made decent the outside of the Church,—with, for some years, not the convenience of a pew, and of course without a fire, even in old-fashioned winters. And then our oracles have told us of days when they were scattered, their shepherd taken from them, thrust into prison—his property confiscated—himself doomed to transportation as a felon—themselves sharing partly in his fate—their temple despoiled, converted into a military store-house to stack the very arms turned against themselves.

Then we have seen that desecrated temple refitted, and an organ placed within it. Then our fathers prayed for the President of the United States, ever true to the gospel injunction, “to obey them that have the rule over you.” And I may remark here, that our Church has always been conspicuous for its loyalty to the government of the land, whether it be to President or King.

We have learnt of the removal of the Church, the disaster connected with it, and how glad many were, thinking it was the “last kick of the beast.” We have seen its re-edification, we have worshipped hitherto within those very walls, entered through the self-same door way of the first Church, and offered our devotions by the light that streamed through the self-same window-frames. And now we linger a little longer—shall I say loth to leave? Yes, verily, loth to leave!

Loth to leave that old altar, where we have met to receive the broken bread so often, so happily—may I hope so profitably. Loth to leave these seats, where we have listened to the preached word—loth to leave that chancel rail, to which so many children have been brought to be baptised in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost—where oft the sweet and solemn vows have been pledged, that have bound young hearts together for the pilgrimage of life,—that Chancel, where has often paused awhile, the lifeless form of some we loved,—on their way to yonder grave yard, to receive the last, the very last offices of the Church.

Oh, it should be a day of heavy, sad, hearts—with us, beloved friends. Old associations! They are strong as iron.—They are stronger than iron,—and when you tear them, the poor heart bleeds.

Here have we used the same prayers, with scarce a verbal alteration, that those ancient servants of the Lord used,—prayed in their language to their God and our God,—in the name of their Redeemer and our Redeemer. We have kept inviolate the doctrines they held, and they held what the Apostles taught. And we are destined to the same judgment, to answer, as they must, touching our fidelity to the common Cross, and the common Master of us all.

Myself, bound by those mighty associations, I hardly can bear to go forth, under that door-way, with the thought that I may not be permitted to return again. Met here for the last time ! broken the bread, here, for the last time ! prayed here for the last time !

And let us think too, that *here* we can redeem no broken vows, nor atone for the privileges we have here abused. To night, and all these things will belong *to the past*. And there are parting duties ere we say to these old walls, our last farewell.

For Jesus' sake, I beseech you brethren, bury deeper than these foundations, whatever of envy, hatred, malice or uncharitableness, any perchance may have, one towards another.—Scatter wider than our disjointed timbers *can* be scattered, any evil surmisings against a neighbor. Leave behind you, all that is false and all that is frail, and bear away hence, nothing but holy purposes, faithful hearts, and devotion of the soul to God. And especially remember, that in forsaking a temple where has ever been taught Jesus Christ and him crucified,—you need not, you may not, you must not forsake the Cross itself. Cling to it. Take it with you as your heart's treasure. Bedew it with the tears of your purest love. Hold it up before men in the gleaming glory of your own lives. Make it honorable in the sight of all men, by the honor you shall show to it. Be faithful to those doctrines of the Cross, which our fathers held, and to which they clung through evil report—and at such sacrifice. For the Cross is the vanquisher of sin, when you bear it out into a sinful world—and the star of your hope, when the expectations of this life are taken away.

And perhaps, among you there may be some who have not found it yet. Some youthful hand that has not grasped it.—Some aged hearer who does not lean upon it. If you leave

these walls without it, you go *empty* away. *Here—now—in this gliding hour—in this crowd of thronging associations—illuminated by the light of God's Spirit yet lingering here to bless, who will be blessed—on bended knee and with broken heart, make yourself the owner of that priceless Treasure. In thy soul's great strength wrestle mightily with God, and resolve thou wilt not go hence, except the Lord bless thee. And once more remember, that though time weakens and wears away our Sanctuary on Earth, there is above, a Temple resplendent with divine light, all thronged with living worshippers, a Temple which Eternity cannot impair, a Temple where praises never cease, and those who sing them, never weary.*

These earthly courts are but the Gate of Heaven. These sacraments below are but the means of grace, by which, those who have been faithful in their use, have become inheritors of the mansions eternal in the Heavens.

Brethren—these doors will soon be closed upon us, and we shall in nature's course soon be sped onwards, (as our fore-worshippers have already been,) to stand and knock at another door. God grant it may be opened unto us,—unto us all, that with the saints of all ages, we, a band on earth, may sit down *together*, not one lost, in the Kingdom of Heaven. And the praise shall be to

Father, Son and Holy Ghost,
Now and forevermore.

APPENDIX.

NOTE A. See page 13.

And this same Mr. Timothy Richards, was an exceedingly zealous and sensitive Churchman. When, one evening, some wags, taking a cast-off weathercock, that had once decorated the first Parish meeting-house, put the same upon the old Church, Mr. Richards, perceiving the same, next morning, thought it was meant as an insult to his Church, and being excited beyond measure, cried aloud through the streets, "Christ within and the Devil without." I remember well the old man's earnestness, as he sat by the hearth, in that same old house, where the service was sometimes held. Many a time have I pushed open the door, the lower part of which was worn off an inch or two, by its friction on the thresh-hold, caused by the settling of the timbers. But Churchmen have a love for olden things, and it grieved the aged pair to remove at last, to a better dwelling, provided by the generosity of their friends.

NOTE B. See page 13.

"Dedham, May 21, 1777. Whereas, I the subscriber, Samuel White, have by my words and actions, caused some of my neighbors to suspect that I am inimical to this and the neighboring States, and being desirous to leave this State, and for the safety of my countrymen, I submit myself to the care of Mr. William Ellis, Jr. promising that I will not exceed the bounds of said Ellis' house and barn yard, on penalty of my life, untill further orders.—Samuel White."

And leave the barn yard, after that, he would not. For it chanced upon a day, Mr. Ellis having sawed out a very heavy oak gate post, and dug a hole for the same, was not able, alone, to lift the post into its place. Now Mr. White, sometimes called Tory Sam, and sometimes Churchman Sam, was standing on the very verge of the barn yard limits, some six feet from the toiling Mr. Ellis—who looking up, said “Come Mr. White, you’re a clever fellow, help me lift this post.” “No,” said Churchman Sam, “I’ll not risk my life to help any body.” Poor Churchman! “To honor the King,” though Scriptural, was not in 1777 so *patriotic as scriptural*.

NOTE C. See page 14.

An anecdote will show you how near the Society came, to having a much more stinted revenue than we have.

In 1791, the twenty-two acres of land, lying all around us, were offered at public vendue, and a Mr. William Palmer was the auctioneer. It was designed to procure for them an hundred dollars per annum. But the gentleman who had at heart the interest of the Church, perceiving there was a combination among the bidders, not to go higher than seventy-five dollars, but let one bid them off, and “all share the spoils,” entreated the auctioneer to “pound on his barrel” (he probably stood on one) till sundown—agreeing to take them himself for fifteen years, at one hundred and thirty-five dollars, and then give them up in an improved condition. The man pounded on his barrel, till sundown; none bid above the seventy-five dollars, and the sale was adjourned (happily for us) sine die.

NOTE D. See page 15.

In 1811, there was a calamitous fire in the town of Newburyport, which consumed more than two hundred buildings, and property estimated at over six hundred thousand dollars. Collections were very generally made, in other towns, to relieve the sufferers.

The old Parish contributed	200,00
Clapboardtree Parish (West Dedham)	60,00
The Parish at Tyot (South Dedham)	57,00
Christ Church (this)	300,00

{See Montague Papers.

DEDHAM, JAN. 30, 1846.

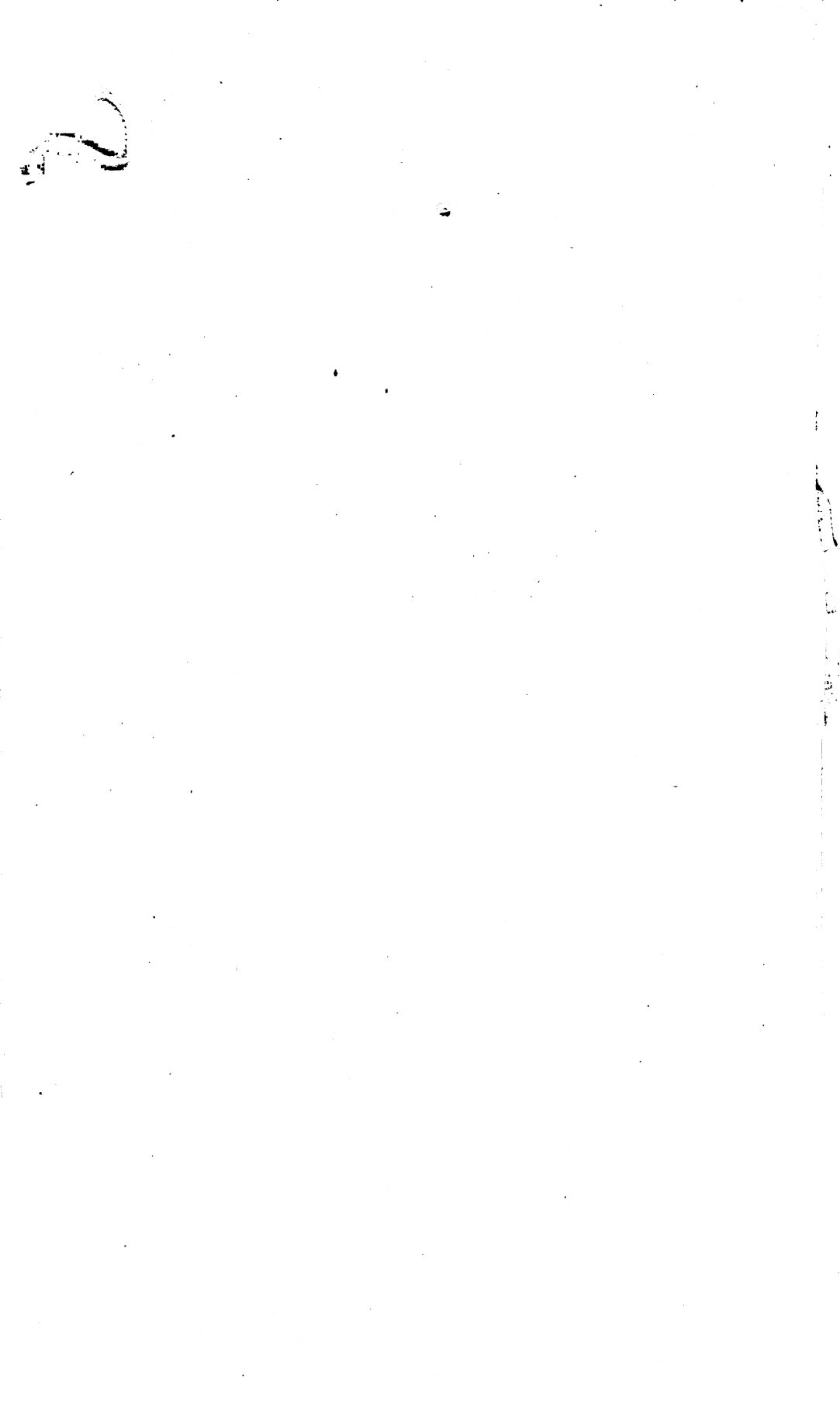
The old Church was sold on Monday, December 1st, 1845, and its dismemberment immediately commenced. The Society worshipped during the interval between that and the occupancy of the new Church, in the Court Room. On Christmas, we were courteously invited into the meeting-house of the First Church, where "the people shewed us no little kindness. For they not only kindled a fire because it was cold," but hung their walls and columns, and pulpit, tastefully with "evergreen." Many thanks for their courtesy.

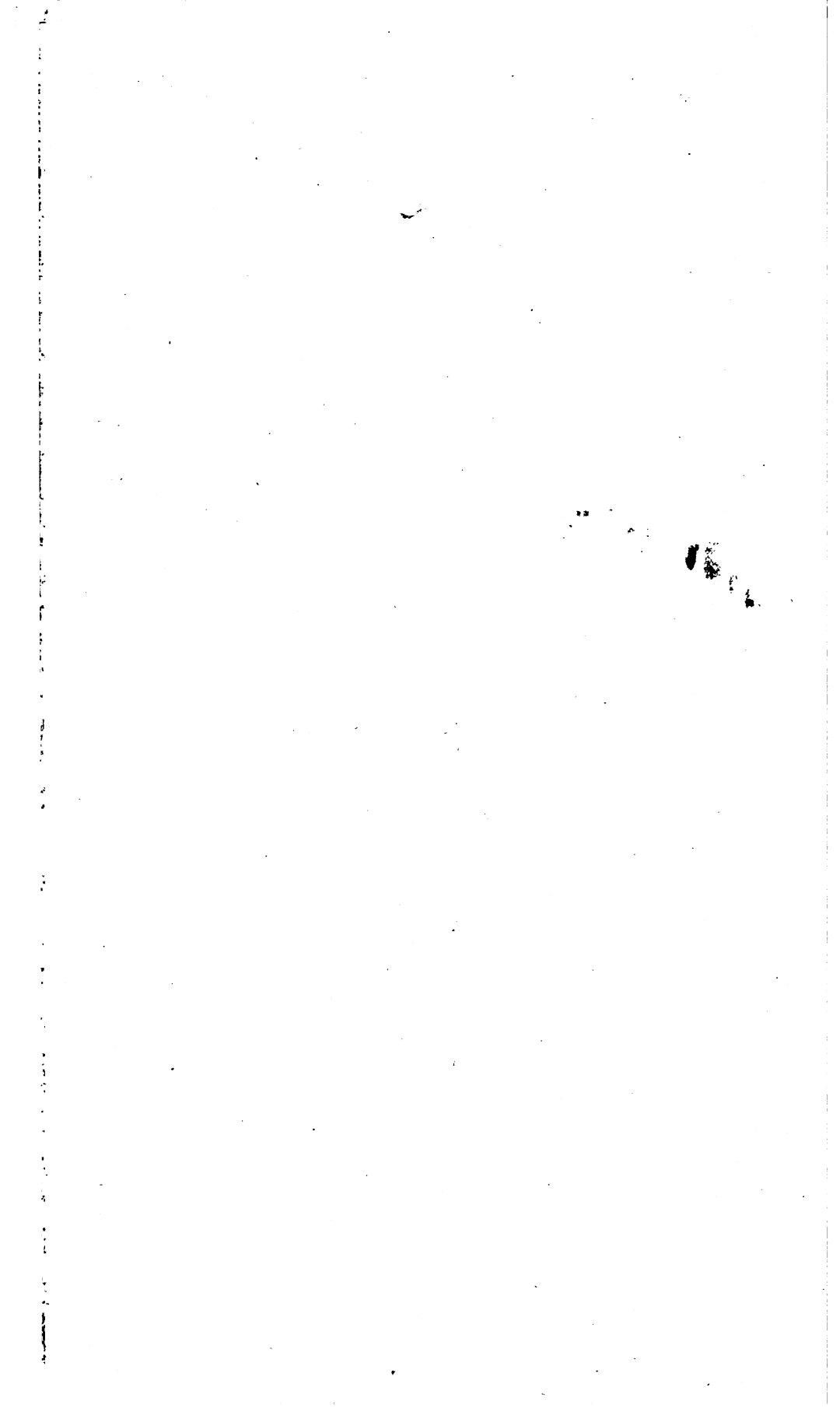
On Thursday, Jan. 15, 1846, the new Church was consecrated by the Rt. Rev. Manton Eastburn, D. D. Bishop of the Diocese. Twenty-one Clergymen were present. The Instrument of Donation being presented to the Bishop, by Ira Cleveland, Esq. one of the Wardens, was read by the Rector of the Church. Prayers were read by Rev. Mr. Baury, of Newton, Lower Falls, assisted by Rev. Isaac Boyle, D. D. reading the Lessons and the Te Deum. The Bishop read the Ante-Communion Service, Rev. Mr. Ten Broek reading the Epistle, and the Letter of Consecration was read by Rev. Mr. Hoppin, of Cambridge. The Ladies of Trinity Church, Boston, presented the Bible and Prayer Book, and the Ladies of our own Parish, furnished the Church with Carpets, Lamps, Altar-cloth, and Window-shades, and Mr. C. D. Davenport gave a Prayer Book for the Communion Table.

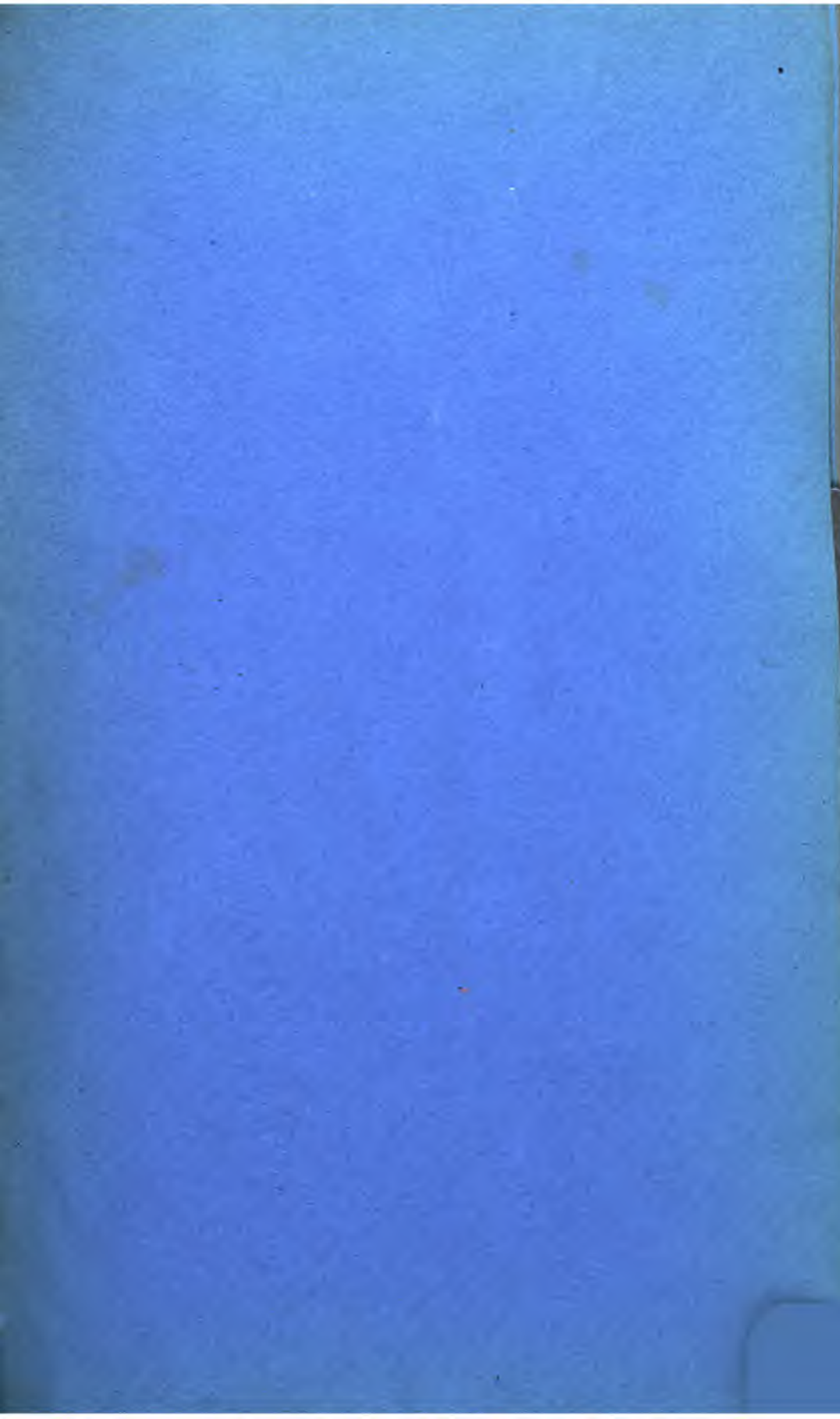
The cost of the Church, including furniture, was about seven thousand dollars. Edward Whiting, Esq. deceased, a late and much esteemed member of the Parish, left a bequest of a thousand dollars, towards the erection of the Church. Other friends extended to us their acceptable liberality, and our work, completed, commends itself as a tasteful and appropriate edifice.

May God accept our offering and fill our new house with his glory, and may the prayers and praises henceforth offered there, be accepted in the Beloved.





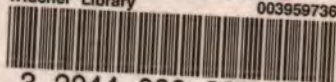








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